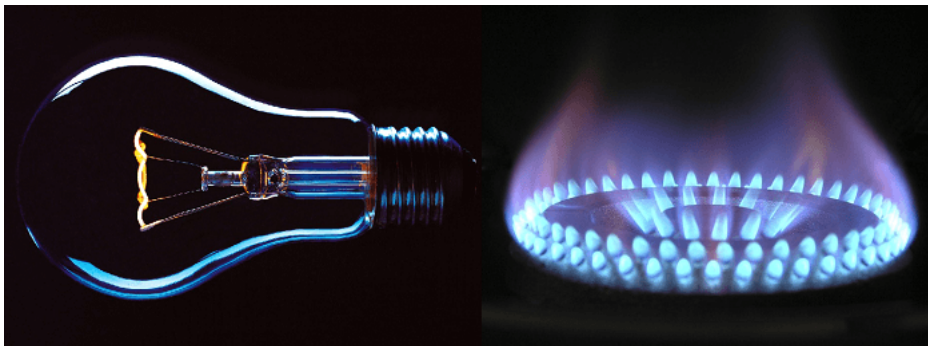


# The PSC Pulse

**2019 BUSIEST YEAR IN RECENT MEMORY  
FOR COMMISSION**



2019 provided many challenges and successes for the Georgia Public Service Commission and its staff.

Almost immediately following the 2019 Legislative Session, the PSC began holding hearings for Georgia Power Company's Integrated Resource Plan.

The year was also highlighted by new rate cases for both Georgia Power and Atlanta Gas Light as well as continued work to oversee the construction of two new nuclear power generators at Plant Vogtle.

By the end of the year, the Commission had voted to nearly double Georgia's use of solar power. Commissioners likewise altered Georgia Power's requested rate increase by approving a smaller increase that will still help the utility to repair storm damage and to clean up coal ash ponds at plants around the state. Atlanta Gas Light received a modest rate increase but it came with caveats that the company must ramp up safety measures and improve customer service.

Construction of the new reactors at Plant Vogtle have been behind schedule and over cost, and PSC consultants have expressed doubts about the project making it's current deadlines (opening Vogtle 3 by November 2021 and Vogtle 4 by November 2022). They also determined that the project is still viable and will offer Georgians clean and reliable electricity for years to come.



## COMMISSIONERS EDUCATING OTHERS



Commissioner **Jason Shaw** visited LaGrange College to discuss clean energy from a conservative perspective. Shaw, at left, was joined by former U.S. Rep. Lynn Westmoreland, executive director of The Ray Albie Kelly and State Sen. Randy Robertson.



Commissioner **Tricia Pridemore** visited Lexington, Ky, where she sat on a panel called "The Intersection of Telecom and Electric Utilities." The EnVision Summit was presented by FERC Chairman Neil Chatterjee .

## COMMISSIONER ECHOLS' 9TH ANNUAL CLEAN ENERGY ROADSHOW HOLDS SIX EVENTS ACROSS GEORGIA



*A school bus powered by propane. The only complaint schools receive is that parents inside homes can't hear this quiet bus coming.*

alternative-fuel-vehicle technology, transportation, mobility and sustainability. The Clean Energy Roadshow was born. At the 2019 Roadshow's two-hour seminar, experts discussed how rural and urban communities use electric, propane and natural gas vehicles in private and commercial transportation. They also discuss how fleets can make informed decisions.

The Clean Energy Roadshow is sponsored by Georgia Power, Blue Bird, Clean Cities Georgia, Nissan, the Natural Gas Association of Georgia, and Atlanta Gas Light.

From Savannah to Albany, Augusta to Atlanta, Commission Vice Chairman **Tim Echols** brought out Bolts, Teslas, and big machinery too, showing off what some call the vehicles of the future — but they're being used right now.

In 2011, Commissioner Echols wanted to find a way to highlight trends in



*Commissioner **Tim Echols** stands next to a Chevy Bolt fully electric vehicle.*



*Even in a slight rain, people came to the Atlanta Roadshow to see a "cherry picker" truck owned by DeKalb County and powered by compressed natural gas.*



## COMMISSION CHAIRMAN MCDONALD NAMED 'SOLAR ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR'

The Georgia Solar Energy Association has presented Commission Chairman **Lauren “Bubba” McDonald** with its “Solar Advocate of the Year” award for his long dedication to solar energy and for his hard work expanding solar energy in the state of Georgia.

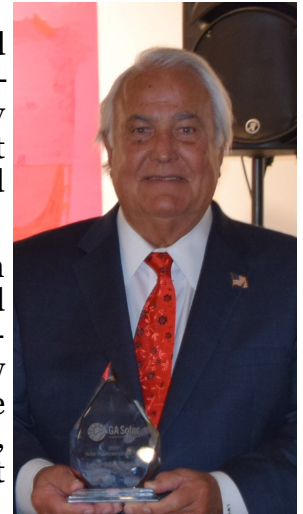
Association officials said the solar industry provides more than 4,000 jobs to Georgians and adds billions of dollars in economic impact to the state.

At the awards luncheon, a video celebrating Chairman McDonald’s life and work was aired. It included comments from Governor Brian Kemp who congratulated the Chairman for his many efforts to expand solar energy without upward pressure on ratepayers and without state subsidies.



*Commission Chairman McDonald and his wife Shelley attend the awards ceremony*

While accepting the award, Chairman McDonald reiterated his long-held stance that nuclear energy and solar energy go hand in hand. When the two new nuclear plants go online, and the state continues to retire more coal plants, Georgia will have some of the cleanest air in the country.



## COMMISSIONER PRIDEMORE VISITS HER ALMA MATER...TWICE

With Football season at full tilt, Commissioner **Tricia Pridemore** visited Kennesaw State University where she tossed the coin before the game against Northern Alabama. Commissioner Pridemore earned her bachelor’s degree from KSU. The KSU Owls won the toss and went on to defeat the North Alabama Lions 41-17.

Commissioner Pridemore returned to KSU a few weeks later at the invitation of the Association of Energy Engineers Student Chapter. The event was titled “Cobb County’s Energy Generation Fleet and Economic Development.” Among the topics discussed was nuclear power and its ability to produce clean, carbon-free energy, and a lot of it.



*PSC Commissioner **Tricia Pridemore** walks onto the field of Fifth Third Bank Stadium at Kennesaw State University to toss the coin at the start of a game against the North Alabama Lions.*

## COAL ASH CLEANUP



Commission Chair **Lauren “Bubba” McDonald**, his wife Shelley and a few PSC staffers visited a coal ash site at the now-closed Plant McDonough-Atkinson in Smyrna. There are four coal ash ponds at the site. Contracting company Cooper Barnette Page has removed all the coal ash from two of the ponds and have two more to go.

The coal ash is removed from unlined ponds and is placed in more-secure lined areas where contaminants cannot make it into the ground water.

The process can be more than a little dangerous. Crews are knowledgeable and conscientious, but mounds of fine coal ash can give way to the weight of bulldozers.

At the event attended by the chairman, several Cooper Barnette Page employees were given awards for their specific attempts to ensure crews remained safe.

## COMMISSIONER ECHOLS ORGANIZES PARTNERSHIP TO BUILD A SOLAR PAVILION ON SAPELO ISLAND

Off the Georgia coast, Sapelo Island’s Hog Hammock community remains the home of the Gullah-Geechee, a community of people who can trace their ancestors back to the plantations of the late 1700s. After a visit to the island, Commissioner **Tim Echols** offered to take on a project that involved nearly a dozen partners and a year’s worth of work. Together, they built a solar pavilion outside the Hog Hammock Public Library. It is expected to help pay the power bill for the small library over the next 30 years.



*Commissioner **Tim Echols** and Dr. Carolyn Dowse, who started the Hog Hammock Public Library many years ago. The solar pavilion is now named in her honor.*



*Vaughnette Goode-Walker, author and historian, spoke about the Geechee people, their customs and history.*

The \$35,000 project, which included a playground upgrade, was funded through donations. Southern Current donated the solar panels. YellaWood donated materials for a pavilion. EDF Renewables donated the construction costs. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources donated ferry time to bring materials to the island. DS Smith provided services to clear dilapidated trees. The University of Georgia provided students to landscape. Darien Telephone donated picnic tables. Island residents themselves pitched in and assisted with site preparation and assembly of picnic tables and playground equipment.

In August, about 40-50 people attended a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Historians, storytellers, library staff and elected officials braved the hot sun for an afternoon celebrating the Gullah-Geechee. One Georgian who can trace her ancestry to the community came all the way down from Atlanta — PSC Program Associate **Pat Welcome**.



*A plaque on the solar pavilion includes the logos of all the partners who helped make the project possible.*



## PSC CUSTOMER SERVICE HELPS SENIORS

**Lisa Jensen** and **Karen Howell**, with Public Service Commission Consumer Affairs, went to Peachtree Road United Methodist Church to represent the Commission at the Council on Aging Community Outreach Program.



*Lisa Jensen and Karen Howell with PSC Customer Service*

The program, geared toward seniors, had three goals.

First, to inform the public on procedures used in referring, accessing services and connecting seniors to needed services and to do it in a timely manner.

Second, to educate the community about available services on the state, regional and county levels and about the referral process to access those services. Specifically, they discussed services available through the Older Americans Act.

Third, the program helped seniors develop a clearer understanding on how the system works to connect seniors to available services, how they can stay better informed about what is available to them and follow-up procedures used to maintain contact with seniors to ensure they receive the best outcomes.



*People gather at Peachtree Road United Methodist Church to hear about services available to seniors and how to connect with those services*

## ALL IN A DAY'S WORK



Facility Protection inspectors **Kenny Rowe** and **Ben Stair** stand high above the ground as they perform an inspection of Atlanta Gas Light's liquid natural gas plant in Macon.

## VISITORS FROM AFAR



The U.S. Department of State hosted a visit by a group from Pakistan. Commission Chairman **Lauren "Bubba" McDonald** took the time to discuss with them the role of the Georgia Public Service Commission and how it handles its many duties.



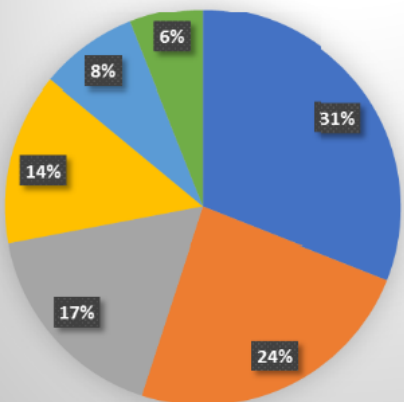
Consulate General Heike Fuller of Germany speaks with Commissioners **Tim Echols** and **Chuck Eaton** on her visit to the Public Service Commission. One of the many interesting facts she shared: most German cars made in the U.S. South are sold to drivers in China.



**Jada Brock**, the director of Operations Support and **Samir Ahmed**, Operations Support Developer, have been selected into a Master's degree program in cybersecurity at Georgia Tech. They are in the Energy and Public Policy tracks.

Georgia Tech ranks second in the nation for cybersecurity curriculum according to Degree Prospects.

### TOP CAUSES OF SECURITY BREACHES



- Phishing/Hacking/Malware
- Individual Mistake
- External Theft
- Vendor
- Internal Theft
- Lost or Improper Disposal

Courtesy of cipher.com

## PSC REPRESENTS AT 5K

Electric Unit Director **Sheree Kernizan**, Utilities Analysts **Sam Johnson** and **George Brown**, and Administrative Assistant **Ann McCullough** sweated it out to represent the Public Service Commission at the Kaiser Permanente Run, Walk, Roll 5K.

The event is intended to promote health and fitness for metro-Atlanta businesses and their employees.



More than 5,000 runners participated in the race. Both Johnson and Kernizan finished in the top 20 percent of the field.



## PSC'S FIRST CHILI COOK-OFF

As the fall weather set in, Administrative Assistant **Quawanda Boyer** founded and organized the Public Service Commission's first Chili Cook-off.



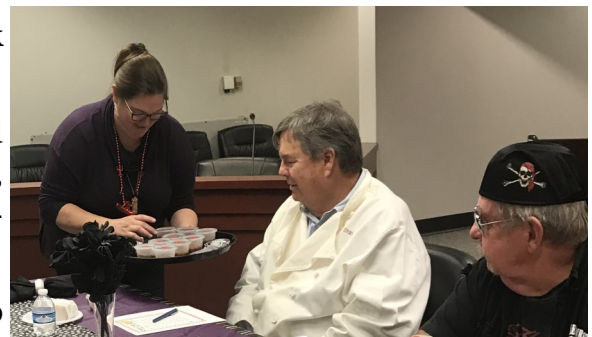
Two commissioners and eight staffers mixed up bowls of their inventive concoctions for a chance to win coveted ribbons and one very important golden trophy.



The ten entrants included Commissioners **Lauren "Bubba" McDonald** and **Tim Echols**, along with staffers **Faith Henning**, **Deborah Flannagan**, **Reece McAlister**, **Sallie Tanner**, **John Gunnells**, **Jada Brock**, **Nick Cooper** and **Tom Bond**.

First, second and third place went to McAlister, Tanner and Gunnells respectively.

Those who opted not to throw their chili bowl into the ring pitched in with cornbread, muffins, cheese, onions, crackers and desserts.



Executive Assistant **Sallie Tanner** hands out samples to judges including former Commissioner **Stan Wise** and former Consumer Affairs head **James Gibson**. Utilities analyst **Ben Deitchman** also served as a judge.



**HAPPY  
ANNIVERSARY!**



**20 YEARS**

Lynn Buffington



**10 YEARS**

Shemetha Jones



**5 YEARS**

Lynn Page



**MILESTONES**



In the last issue of The PSC Pulse, Electric Unit Director **Sheree Kernizan** was celebrating the wedding of her son, Michel. No need to stop celebrating. Her other son married in September. Congratulations Marcus and Desirae Kernizan.

Administrative Assistant Sallie Tanner has been appointed to the board of directors of the Women's Energy Network Greater Atlanta Chapter. This organization works to provide mentoring and networking opportunities for women in the energy profession.

Members include women from private and public energy organizations including careers from electricity production to gas pipelines.



Consumer Affairs Administrative Assistant **Stephanie Billups** and her husband welcomed a beautiful new addition to their family, a daughter named Dallas.

## COMMISSION CALENDAR

### January 2020

1—New Year's Day  
2 — Committee Meetings waived  
7—Administrative Session  
16—Committee Meetings  
20—Martin Luther King Day  
21—Administrative Session  
30—Committee Meeting

### February 2020

4—Administrative Session  
13—Committee Meetings  
18—Administrative Session  
27—Committee Meetings

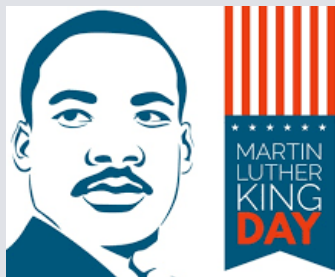
### March 2020

3—Administrative Session  
12—Committee Meetings  
17—Administrative Session  
26— Committee Meetings  
31— Administrative Session

## HOLIDAYS COMING UP!



**Wednesday, Jan. 1**



**Monday, Jan. 20**



**Tuesday, March 17**

### Georgia Public Service Commission

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### COMMISSIONERS

**Lauren "Bubba" McDonald, Chairman**  
**Tim G. Echols, Vice Chair**  
**Chuck Eaton**  
**Tricia Pridemore**  
**Jason Shaw**

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**Lynn Page, Newsletter Editor.**

**Executive Director: Deborah Flannagan**  
**Executive Secretary: Reece McAlister**